

## **ROMNEY MARSHES AREA INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

A meeting of the Board was held at Camber Village Hall, on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 2.00 pm.

### **PRESENT.**

Elected Members:

D Cole Esq., L Cooke Esq., E Langrish Esq., Mrs H Langrish, E Lovejoy Esq., C Ramus Esq., D Wheeler Esq., A Wellsted Esq. and M Wrout Esq.

Appointed Members:

Cllr P Coe, Cllr A Cragg, Cllr K Gandy, Cllr C Hoggart, D Lovejoy Esq., Cllr A Mier, Cllr P Osbourne, R Patten Esq., Cllr S Prochak, Cllr C Solly and Cllr D Wimble.

Staff:

N. Botting Esq., Clerk/Engineer to the Board, Mrs D Chalcroft, Financial Officer and Mr R Monje Esq., Assistant Clerk/Engineer to the Board.

### **678. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

The Chairman welcomed the members to the new venue of Camber Village Hall, and then asked for a minute's silence to honour the passing of Mr David Body, who had been a Board Member for 42 years. He then asked the Clerk to read out any apologies for absence;

Apologies were received from:

Elected Members;

A Clifton Esq., A Clifton-Holt Esq. and D Thompson Esq.

Appointed Members;

Cllr G Allison, H Bates Esq., Cllr M Burgess, Cllr ARJ Hills, Cllr Mrs P Rolfe and Cllr N Waters.

### **679. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Clerk took the meeting and asked for nominees for Chairman. After brief deliberation it was PROPOSED by L Cooke Esq., SECONDED by Cllr Mrs S Prochak and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that D Lovejoy Esq. be re-appointed as Chairman to the Board for the year.

### **680. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman took the meeting and asked for nominees for Vice-Chairman. After deliberation it was PROPOSED by Cllr D Wimble, SECONDED by D Wheeler Esq. and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that L Cooke Esq. be re-appointed as Vice-Chairman to the Board for the year.

### **681. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 26<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2019.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019, having previously been circulated to members prior to the meeting, were taken as read. The minutes were accepted as a correct record of the previous meeting and signed by the Chairman.

### **682. MATTERS ARISING.**

There were no matters arising.

### **683. ENGINEER'S REPORT**

The Clerk/Engineer read through the report and gave further detail on the Board's maintenance activities since the last meeting, focusing on the annual weedcut which was 90% complete. The problems with the leaking seals on the Tillingham Sluice were discussed; concern was expressed on the effect of raised salinity levels on invertebrates in the section of Main River affected, and the drop in water levels that resulted in many internal ditches all but drying out. The Engineer explained that the issue had been addressed by the EA but only after representation by the IDB, who had been alerted by Board members. The Vice-Chairman emphasised the need for Board members to be vigilant and report possible problems to Board staff, stating that this was a good example of such practice. The Engineer noted the recent spring tides which, combined with a tidal surge, had again shown weaknesses in infrastructure such as the highway surface water sewer at the Strand, Rye. He explained that on large tides the system was prone to backing up through porous brickwork and pipework that causing the A259 to flood at the Tillingham Sluice and a location further west, meaning traffic delays and congestion. Cllr P Osborne expressed frustration that the relevant authorities had not acted to remedy the problem but acknowledged that Board staff had noted the problem. The Engineer stated that he had been informed by the EA that the matter was now in the hands of the highway authority.

### **684. CONSENTS ISSUED**

The Engineer read through the list of consents issued in the previous months and explained each application; there were no issues raised.

### **685. APPROVED MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.**

The Vice-Chairman gave an overview of the approved minutes from the F&GP Committee; there were no issues raised.

### **686. ACCOUNTS VOUCHERS.**

A list of accounts paid since the last meeting had been circulated to members prior to this meeting. The Vice-Chairman explained that the Finance and General Purposes Committee had scrutinised the accounts paid and asked if members had any questions; with no issues raised, the list was subsequently approved.

### **687. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.**

The Financial Officer gave a comprehensive breakdown of the Income and Expenditure Report for the previous financial year and the current year to date. The Clerk/Engineer informed the Board that with the recently announced withdrawal of support for the Windows 7 operating system, the computer budget would likely be exceeded as new mapping software may be required to ensure compatibility with Windows 10.

### **688. EXTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT AND OPINION.**

The Financial Officer informed the Board that the Audit had been completed. The External Auditors, PKF Littlejohn, had raised no issues with the Audit Return.

### **689. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.**

It was agreed that the next Main Board meeting would be held at 2 pm on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at Camber Village Hall.

### **690. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.**

Cllr D Wimble commented on the potential problems caused by the poor application of fertilizers near watercourses, and suggested that the run-off from such sites would increase weed growth in such watercourses. The Clerk/Engineer replied that staff would remind landowners and occupiers of their responsibilities when using fertilisers beside watercourses in the upcoming annual newsletter.

The Vice-Chairman spoke at length on his continuing frustration with the EA with regards to the concept of a Water Transfer Licence, and his own attempts at receiving clarification on the matter as an individual applying for a licence. He stated that he had attended meetings on the matter with Water Resource officers from the Agency but still had no clear idea of what his next action should be. It was acknowledged that, although the

Board's position had been clarified nationally, the situation facing individuals faced with the application process was somewhat muddled.

Lastly the Clerk/Engineer informed members of his and the Vice-Chairman's recent trip to the ADA Conference. The Vice Chairman stated that the day had been disrupted by the cancellation of certain speakers who had withdrawn from the Conference due to the upcoming General Election. This meant that a number of late invites had to stand in with alternative presentations; he concluded that the rather disjointed feel to the day meant that, in his opinion, the Conference did not provide as much value as in previous years.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1510 hrs.